

593 adultery except with a woman who is already married. A deceived
837 wife who wishes to take her revenge need only reveal to the spouse
of her husband's partner the criminal relations that victimize them
both."

593 Let us add that another of the husband's duties is to render help
602 to his wives' relatives if the latter are in needy circumstances.

Of course, the failure to fulfill these obligations could cause
593 the wife to request a divorce. Divorce thus exists among the Mossi,
586 although women rarely resort to it. The bride price is never claimed
back by the husband, even if the woman has remained sterile. The
children always devolve to the husband.

The husband, on the other hand, may turn out his wife, but
Mossi husbands do not usually make use of this right.

585 Let us add that the matter of the girl's virginity at marriage
836 is settled by the Mossi as by most other Blacks. If a girl is bought
or betrothed from a very young age, she must preserve herself intact
for her future husband. An unbetrothed girl, however, is free to use
her own body when she reaches puberty, and if she marries later she
cannot be reprimanded for having become a woman prior to her
wedding.

567 Let us now proceed to the status of slaves.

Two kinds of slaves are distinguished among the Mossi, aside
from the usual distinction between trade slaves and house slaves.

1. The daparé (etymologically, "followers," "men who walk
behind their master," from da, "man" and paré, "behind"). They
are unmarried slaves.

2. The bagaré ("men of the enclosure"). Those are married
captives.

/565/ The daparé live with their master and always remain at
his disposal for any work that may come up. They have no small
individual plots, therefore, and their master provides them with food
and clothing at all times. When they reach marriageable age, their
master buys them a wife (or at least it was so in the old days; she
would cost the master about 60,000 or 70,000 cowries), and then
they settle on their own.

582 I. Differences of tribe or caste. The Mossi may not contract
 326 marriage with blacksmiths. This is absolutely forbidden. However,
 564 they may marry among the Foulsé, Samo, Peul, Yarsé, etc. "

This calls for several remarks. The blacksmiths of Yatenga are Foulsé and not Mossi. However, it is not a tribal difference which dictates the prohibition under discussion, since the Mossi can marry among the Foulsé as a whole. It is rather a difference in caste. It must be noted, as we said above /not translated/, that the common Foulsé cannot marry blacksmiths either.

[171] Here, as in all of the /French/ Sudan, blacksmiths are both feared and scorned. Basically, they are regarded as fearful sorcerers.

582 II. Kinship. There must be a lapse of 200 years between the time of the betrothed couple and the time when their common ancestor lived. This is likewise an absolute impediment.

III. If a Mossi has relations with a young girl or woman belonging to his fiancée's soukala during the period of his engagement, the marriage cannot take place.

This impediment, however, is not absolute. If the guilty man begs for the forgiveness of the family head and the latter accords it, the union may be effected later. "

582 IV. Unnatural practices. The marriage cannot take place: (1) if
 839 the betrothed man has been caught in the act of sexual intercourse with a she-ass (a phenomenon none too rare in Yatenga); and (2) if the betrothed girl has relations with a native who had sexual intercourse with a she-ass. These impediments are absolute.

This is why the inhabitants of a Yatenga village (Dénia) who are reputed to have had relations with asses in former times may not marry outside their locality.

582 V. Infirmities. If the fiancé is blind, the marriage may not take
 [732] place unless the girl consents to it. No one can constrain her to do so.

VI. Leprosy. The same applies when the fiancé has leprosy.

VII. Impuberty of the betrothed pair. The marriage cannot take place unless both parties are nubile. This is an absolute impediment, but in practice the problem rarely arises.

VIII. Insanity of one of the betrothed. "

582 • 836 Question of virginity. The girl's virginity is not very important here and, it must be pointed out, far less so than among the Bambara. This is, incidentally, connected with the fact that the marriage bond is less sound and the separation of the spouses easier to obtain. A combination of related facts makes the institution of marriage and

582 the household a more serious and more binding affair among the
●836 Bambara than in this particular region. /241/

Vadier says on the subject, "The fact that a young girl has had relations with a native other than her husband prior to marriage is by no means an impediment to the marriage.

"Many betrothed girls have lovers. It even happens quite frequently that their fathers are forced to go in search of them at the homes of the young men with whom they have run away. Actually, this matter is of no concern to the husband. As long as he gets the woman, the rest matters little to him. It is not unusual for a girl to bring a child which she had by another man into her husband's home. This child eventually returns to its natural father."

582 This picture is painted in rather bleak colors. In reality, fathers
836 and mothers do try, as best they can, to prevent their daughters from
585 taking lovers. They do not like to see them go to the "tom-tom,"
626 but they can scarcely keep them from going, and often the "tom-tom,"
684 like our own country dances, plays havoc with a young girl's virtue.
If the girl says nothing, everything goes well. Since among the Mossi there is no exhibition of the skirt cloth following the consummation of the marriage, there is no evidence. Even if the husband knows ahead of time or finds out at the last moment, he says nothing out of shame, to avoid being scorned. When the father leads his daughter to the hut of the ancestors before sending her to her fiancé, however, she often does not dare enter the hut. Having lost her virginity and fearing that she might be killed by the ancestors, she admits her wrongdoing to her father. Sometimes she may have the courage or the effrontery to enter the ancestral hut, but later, if she falls ill in her husband's hut, she will interpret her condition as the ancestors' vengeance for the sort of moral perjury she committed by entering their hut in a state of transgression, and she will confess to her husband what she has done. In both cases the lover is confronted, in the first instance by the father, in the second by the husband, and a goat, two canari of dolo, and a chicken are demanded from him. A sacrifice will be offered to the ancestors with these various items to ask their forgiveness, they will pardon the wife and the lover, and order will be restored.

848 Sometimes, as mentioned earlier, a child is the fruit of a girl's passion. The lover having made reparation and the ancestors being satisfied, the husband will accept the child along with the girl, but